

even more of the population in need of crucial health services. Adolescents and young adults living in rural areas are more vulnerable to opioid abuse than their urban counterparts. The prevalence of fatal drug overdoses has skyrocketed in rural areas. High unemployment and a greater rate of the types of injuries that result in prescriptions for opioid medications have contributed to this.

For these reasons, I again look forward to cosponsoring the Save Rural Hospitals Act in the 115th Congress. We must ensure access to health care for Americans living in rural areas.

On average, trauma victims in rural areas must travel twice as far as victims in urban areas to the closest hospital. As a result, 60 percent of trauma deaths occur in rural areas, even though only 20 percent of Americans live in rural areas.

The Affordable Care Act was supposed to help cut costs for health care, but that did not happen for everyone. American families have found out the hard way, with increased taxes, looming regulations, and a slew of broken promises, from untrue cost controls to limitations on consumer choice. We were told that, “if you like your coverage, you can keep it.” Well, that was not even close to being true.

I look forward to working with my colleagues to fix our flawed healthcare system. Currently, healthcare costs have gone up, premiums have increased by double digits, but choices have decreased. Deductibles are so high that many Americans, despite having “coverage,” cannot afford to seek care under that coverage. Well, that is not right. It is not fair, and it is not feasible. There must be a better way, and I know together we can work to find a stable transition to a 21st century healthcare system that works for everyone in America, particularly for those in rural regions where the need is great and the services are scarce.

DON'T CUT PLANNED PARENTHOOD FUNDING

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. KENNEDY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow this body is set to vote on a budget resolution that would dramatically cut Federal funding for Planned Parenthood. But today there is still time to reconsider that proposal and listen to the thousands, if not millions, of men, women, and children who are urging us not to because they understand the impact in our communities better than almost any of us here today.

Now, this isn't just about blocking a woman's constitutional right to her own healthcare options, although that would be bad enough. This is about gutting Medicaid reimbursements for preventive care and family planning, revoking every single dollar for 360,000 lifesaving breast exams and 4 million

tests for sexually transmitted diseases. This is Congress choosing political gamesmanship at the expense of Americans' health, particularly those who cannot afford care otherwise. This is a tactical strike on low-income women and families.

In my home State of Massachusetts, it would immediately deny access to care to nearly 10,000 patients covered by MassHealth. For these men, women, and children, it is not as simple as walking to the nearest community health center, because over 50 percent of Planned Parenthood centers across our country are found in medically underserved communities.

For the elderly woman in need of cancer screening, there would be nowhere else to turn. For the young expectant mother in need of prenatal care, there would no longer be a community doctor that she can trust. For the dad whose son is in need of strep throat treatment, the only option left may be an unaffordable trip to the emergency room.

Mr. Speaker, if this is intended to be a warning shot on a constitutionally guaranteed right to have an abortion, my Republican colleagues are missing their target and, instead, they are aimed right at poor Americans.

I urge every Member of this House to talk to their constituents who have received care at Planned Parenthood centers before voting on this bill. I ask them to listen and understand the life-altering impact that it will have on the families who can least afford it.

WE HAVE HIT THE GROUND RUNNING

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. LEWIS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. LEWIS of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to say how incredibly proud I am to be representing Minnesota's Second District. It is an honor that I do not take lightly, and I am excited to get to work for my constituents.

Here in the House we have hit the ground running. During my first 2 weeks in Congress, we took steps to jump-start our economy by addressing the massive web of regulations that were issued by unelected and unaccountable bureaucrats in the administration. In fact, 2016 was a record-breaking year for Federal agencies. Unfortunately, the record they set is not a good one.

In 2016 alone, there were 3,853 finalized rules and regulations, amounting to 97,110 pages. That is more than any year in history. Based on the page numbers alone, this amount of regulations may seem staggering, but the economic costs are even more damaging. In 2015, regulations cost American consumers and small businesses an estimated \$1.88 trillion in lost economic productivity and higher prices.

Many in Washington have started to call Federal regulators the fourth

branch of government, unelected branch of government when it comes from the agencies. For too long, these regulators have run rampant, hurting our small businesses, stifling job growth, and hampering our economy. In fact, we have had one of the slowest economic recoveries coming out of a severe recession in modern times.

That is why, last week, I was proud to join my colleagues in passing the REINS Act and the Midnight Rules Relief Act. Additionally, this week we passed the Regulatory Accountability Act. Today I am proud to introduce my first piece of legislation, the Reforming Executive Guidance Act. This will further increase transparency and ensure that regulatory agencies are held accountable for their actions.

My bill will ensure that significant guidance documents promulgated by the regulatory agencies are subject to congressional review. These guidance documents are only meant to clarify regulations. However, over the years, executive agencies have used these guidance documents more and more often to expand their power and make significant policy changes. We are the accountable branch who are to make those policy changes. These policy changes are negatively affecting our businesses and imposing these significant costs on our economy.

My bill simply ensures that significant guidance documents are fully subject to the Congressional Review Act and the Administrative Procedure Act's notice and comment requirement. Not only does this increase congressional oversight, it also increases transparency, as the public will now have the ability to review these guidance documents before they are finalized. I ask my colleagues to join me in supporting this straightforward, commonsense legislation.

I look forward to working with my colleagues throughout the 115th Congress as we address the major issues facing the American people.

THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT WORKS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PAYNE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, one of my constituents, Paul from Montclair, New Jersey, shared with my office his struggle with bladder cancer, HIV, and severe depression. He told us that he is scared, like most people who rely on the Affordable Care Act, because Republicans are determined to gut this legislation. He told us that he depends on the ACA for his medications and treatments, without which he fears he will die.

Paul lives on an unstable income, and it is only because of the ACA that he is able to afford his treatments. The staffer in my office who spoke with Paul told me that he could feel the fear in Paul's voice as he listened to Paul's story. Paul is rightly concerned about